The Commission Orders

(A) Southern's request for rehearing of the September 25 Order is hereby denied.

(B) Previously-granted waivers of the requirement to file long-term (longer than one year in duration) transaction agreements are hereby rescinded on a prospective basis, effective 30 days after the issuance of a final order in this proceeding, as discussed in the body of this order.

(C) Pursuant to Ordering Paragraph (B), the reporting requirements applicable to power marketers for long-term (longer than one year in duration) transactions are hereby revised to match those applicable to traditional public utilities, effective 30 days after the issuance of a final order in this proceeding, as discussed in the body of this order.

(D) The entities listed in the caption of this order are hereby made parties to this proceeding.

(E) The Secretary shall promptly publish a copy of this order in the **Federal Register**.

By the Commission. Commissioner Bailey concurred with a separate statement attached.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

Bailey, Commissioner, *concurring*

I strongly support this order to the extent it equalizes the reporting requirements for both marketers and traditional utilities which have Commission authorization to sell power at market-based rates.

I have previously questioned the rationale, if any, for different reporting requirements for different types of sellers with market-based power sales authority.[1] I can see no reason, in a post-Order No. 888 world of increased competition and nondiscriminatory access to transmission service, to treat marketers any differently than traditional utilities for purposes of reporting their power sales transactions. I have been concerned that the disparity in reporting requirements could somehow confer a competitive advantage on those power sellers with a lesser reporting obligation and, perhaps, without the same obligation to disclose commercially sensitive information. Today's order removes that disparity.

I am less certain as to the desirability of the Commission's means to remove the disparity in reporting requirements. The Commission chooses to *increase* the reporting requirements applicable to power marketers by obligating them to file for Commission review all long-term power sales agreements (which now need only be reflected in quarterly transaction summaries). In my opinion, the better approach might be to *decrease* the reporting requirements applicable to traditional utilities by allowing them to reflect their long-term transactions in the quarterly reports they currently are allowed to file for all short-term transactions.

Today's order explains why power marketers should not be particularly burdened by the new filing requirement, since long-term agreements typically are reduced to writing anyway. Today's order does not explain, however, how the filing (as opposed to the quarterly reporting) of long-term agreements by marketers and traditional utilities alike will materially help the Commission in its monitoring of competitive markets and in its responsibility to ensure that all wholesale power rates are just and reasonable.

I suspect the benefit, from the Commission's perspective, in the filing of long-term power sales agreements lies in the belief that the such filing will convey more and better information (on price, terms and conditions) than that reflected in the quarterly reports the Commission receives. If, so, I question whether the better approach is not to add to the filing requirements of power marketers, but rather to standardize and improve the quantity and quality of information reflected in the quarterly reports they submit.

Even if there is no general obligation to file long-term agreements, the Commission presumably would continue to require their filing to the extent they reflect a transaction among affiliates.[2] Moreover, since, as the order explains, the quarterly reporting requirement for short-term transactions is based on a discretionary waiver of the section 205 notice and filing requirement, the Commission could rescind that waiver, and require the filing of any agreement, at any time—such as upon the filing of a customer complaint. (This is analogous to the Commission's commitment to rescind any waiver of the Order No. 888 (open access tariff) and 889 (OASIS and separation of functions) requirements upon the filing of a customer complaint [3]).

It may be useful to consider this issue in a more global context. The Commission might want to consider that type of information it (and the public) needs from the sellers of power at market-based rates at the same time it considers other reporting and filing improvements—for example, at the time it considers revisions to the FERC Form 1 reporting requirements applicable to all public utilities.

And I am reluctant to insist upon generic improvements to Commission reporting and filing requirements in the context of our action on a single request for rehearing filed almost three years ago by a single utility in a particular adjudication. Today's order, recognizing the Commission's adoption of new policy, grants party status to power marketers, which might otherwise be caught off-guard, for the purpose of seeking rehearing of this rehearing order. I welcome any comment as to whether the Commission should employ a different method for equalizing the reporting and filing requirements applicable to power marketers and traditional utilities.

Vicky A. Bailey,

Commissioner.

[FR Doc 99–14120 Filed 6–3–99; 8:45 am]

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[1] *See* Clarksdale Public Utilities Commission v. Energy Services, Inc., 85 FERC ¶ 61,268 at 62,079–80 ((1998) concurring statement).

[2] The Commission has long required power marketers with market-based rate authorization to commit in their tariffs not to sell power to or purchase power from an affiliated traditional utility, and vice versa, unless the Commission first approves such a transaction in a separate rate filing under section 205 of the FPA. *Cf., e.g.,* Detroit Edison Company, 80 FERC ¶ 61,348 (1997); GPU Advanced Resources, Inc., 81 FERC ¶ 61,335 (1997).

[3] *See* Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, 79 FERC ¶ 61,260 at 61,127 (1997); Easton Utilities Commission, *et al.,* 83 FERC ¶ 61,334 (1998).

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP98–645–000]

Trunkline Gas Company; Notice of Informal Technical Conference

May 28, 1999.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) will convene an informal staff technical conference on June 28, 1999, at 2:00 p.m., in Room 3M3, of the Commission's offices at 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C., to discuss Trunkline's answers to staff's data requests in the above-captioned proceeding. The conference is open to all interested persons.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 99–14176 Filed 6–3–99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP99–102–000]

Wyoming Interstate Company, Ltd.; Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Medicine Bow Lateral Project

May 28, 1999.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) that discusses the environmental impacts of the Medicine Bow Lateral Project proposed in the above-referenced docket. The proposed project would include the construction and operation of approximately 149 miles of 24-inch-diameter pipeline and 7,170 horsepower (hp) of compression.